



Senate Approves Measure to Preserve Mt. Soledad Veterans Monument

August 1, 2006

Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate today approved legislation that could help preserve the Mt. Soledad Veterans Monument by transferring ownership of the land from the City of San Diego to the Federal government, U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) announced. The bill will now go to the President for his signature.

“I am very pleased the Senate passed this bill today. I do not believe the cross should be torn down,” Senator Feinstein said. **“The Mt. Soledad Cross has been a great source of hope and inspiration for decades, and it has important historical significance to veterans and San Diegans alike.”**

Senator Boxer said, **“I am pleased that the Senate passed the Hunter legislation to preserve this historic memorial to our veterans, and I hope that the President will quickly sign it into law.”**

The legislation was originally sponsored by Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA). It was approved by the House of Representatives on July 19, 2006. Senators Boxer and Feinstein then sought to move the bill by unanimous consent through the Senate, which occurred late today.

The California Senators were joined in this effort by Senators Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) who had introduced legislation on the issue as well. Under the legislation, the Department of Defense will manage the Monument and maintenance would be conducted by the Mt. Soledad Memorial Association.

The City of San Diego had been under court order to take down the cross by early August or face a \$5,000-a-day fine. But Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy issued a stay to put off fines against the city until the issue has moved through the judicial system. The transfer of ownership to the Federal Government would remove State legal obstacles to keeping the monument.

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